THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Jharkhand representatives put forth their perceptions of the problems of the region and sougnt protection for their language culture and identity. The representatives also expressed their willingness to continue the process of talks. The Union Home Minister impressed upon them that nothing should be done which might impair the unity and integrity of the country and that it should be possible to find a mutually acceptable solution to the problems of the people of the area. The concern of the Central Government and the State Government was reiterated in this meeting for development of the region and for improving the lot of the people of the region.

(c) and (d) Copies of the memorandum submitted by Jharkhand representatives have been sent to the State Governments of Bihar, Madya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal.

Implementation of afforestation programme in catchment areas of Orissa

275. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state ;

(a) whether Government have taken up afforestation programme in the catchment areas in different States ; and

(b) if so, what specific afforestation programme has been undertaken in the catchment areas of different rivers and the river projects in Orissa ?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) Yes Sir. There is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Ministry of Agriculture called Soil Conservation in the catchment of River Valley Projects which has afforestation as a component.

(b) Under this schme, in Orissa afforestation work is being done in catchments of Hirakud, Machkund/Sileru and Rengali/Mandira.

Performance of Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation

276. SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state ;

(a) whether it is a fact that MMTC has been incurrnig losses ;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and the year since when MMTC is running at loss ; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to improve the performance of MMTC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Issuance of guidelines by Government to State Bank of Indore for Assistance to Small Scale Industries

277. SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to issue new guidelines to the State Bank of Indore in regard to giving assistance to small scale industries ; and